

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 EA-11 SCI-06 AEC-11

CIAE-00 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 OIC-04 OMB-01 PA-04

PM-07 PRS-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15

TRSE-00 RSC-01 NSC-07 DODE-00 FEAE-00 DRC-01 /170 W

----- 044309

R 121630Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6391

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION IAEA VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11051

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PARM, IT, UR, US

SUBJECT: ITALIAN RATIFICATION OF NPT

REF: MOSCOW 11645 PARA 2(C)

1. SOVIET DCM IN ROME, JAKOV OSTROVSKY, TOLD EMBOFF HE BELIEVES ITALIANS ARE NOW DISPOSED TO MOVE AHEAD IN DUE COURSE WITH RATIFICATION OF NPT, DESPITE CONFUSING SIGNALS ON THE SUBJECT WITH WHICH WE ALL ARE FAMILIAR. THE MOMENT OF TRUTH, OSTROVSKY BELIEVES, WILL BE AT THE POINT WHEN THE VERIFICATON AGREEMENT IS FINALLY RATIFIED BY THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT. AT THAT TIME THE FARNESINA (FOREIGN MINISTRY) WILL BE FACED WITH THE DECISION EITHER TO SURRENDER CONTROL BY FORWARDING NPT TO THE PARLIAMENT FOR RATIFICATION, OR TO MOUNT A LAST EFFORT TO SIDETRACK NPT BY HOLDING IT IN THE BUREAUCRATIC PROCESS WITHIN THE FARNESINA.

2. OSTROVSKY RECALLED THATHE HAD FOLLOWED THE FULL BUREAUCRATIC COURSE OF THE NPT IN ITALY DURING HIS THREE-YEAR TOUR, AND HE REMEMBERED WELL THAT THE FARNESINA ELEMENTS WHO WERE LESS THAN PLEASED WITH NPT HAD WON THE VERY IMPORTANT FIRST ROUND WHEN THE VERIFICATION AGREEMENT AND THE NPT HAD BEEN SEPARATED WITH
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A RATIONALE OF LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATENESS WHICH WAS NOT TOO

CONVINCING. DURING OSTROVSKY'S TOUR HERE HE SAID THE SOVIETS FREQUENTLY FOLLOWED UP ON THE NPT AND CAME TO REALIZE THAT THE RESISTANCE TO NPT WAS "ABOVE THE PERTRIGRANI AND FONTANA-GIUSTI LEVEL" BUT NOT NECESSARILY AT MORO'S LEVEL. OSTROVSKY DISCOUNTED OTHER ALLEGED CENTERS OF OPPOSITION TO NPT (SUCH AS PARLIAMENT). (COMMENT: BETWEEN THE OFFICE LEVEL OF THEN OFFICE DIRECTOR PETRIGNANI AND MINISTERIAL LEVEL THERE ARE EFFECTIVELY TWO PERSONALITIES: POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR ROBERTO DUCCI AND SECRETARY GENERAL ROBERTO GAJA WHO RECENTLY PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE QUESTIONING THE SUITABILITY OF NPT FOR ITALY. SEE ROME'S 9906).

3. OSTROVSKY SAID THE ARGUMENTATION THE ITALIANS GENERALLY USED WITH THE SOVIETS WAS TO NOTE ITALIAN CONCERN FOR THE LACK OF SUPPORT FOR NPT AMONG THE OTHER MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES. OF LATE, THE INDIAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSION HAS BEEN CITED BY THE ITALIANS AS ADDING TO THEIR PROBLEMS WITH NPT. THE SOVIETS HAVE ARGUED THAT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND WORLDWIDE, THE ITALIANS SHOULD TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE. ITALY COULD BEST ENHANCE NPT'S CHANCES AND SHOW A GOOD EXAMPLE BY RATIFYING.

4. IN ANY CASE, WHATEVER THE UPS AND DOWNS OF THE COURSE OF NPT IN THE FARNESINA, OSTROVSKY BELIEVES VARIOUS FACTORS, INCLUDING THE ATTITUDE OF SOME OF ITALY'S EC PARTNERS, HAVE CONVINCED THE ITALIANS TO MOVE AHEAD, ALTHOUGH AT THE SAME DELIBERATE PACE. HE NOTED THAT THE BATTLE IS NOT WON, OF COURSE, UNTIL THE NPT IS IN PARLIAMENT, OUT OF THE HANDS OF THOSE IN THE FARNESINA WHO WOULD OBSTRUCT IT. OSTROVSKY SUGGESTED THAT A STRONG DIPLOMATIC PUSH AS SOON AS THE VERIFICATION AGREEMENT IS RATIFIED BY BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT (THE SENATE HAS ALREADY APPROVED) MIGHT HELP DISLODGE NPT FROM THE FARNESINA IF THE LAST DITCH ANTI-NPT HOLDOUTS ARE TOO TENACIOUS.

5. COMMENT: OSTROVSKY'S VIEWS OF NPT'S PROBLEMS IN ITALY ARE NOT DIFFERENT FROM OURS, AND WE BELIEVE HIS CONCLUSIONS HAVE MERIT. WE SUSPECT THE ITALIANS WERE SHAKEN BY THEIR ISLOATION IN THE ZANGGER COMMITTEE, AND OSTROVSKY COULD BE RIGHT THAT IN THE END THE GOI (FARNESINA) WILL NOT BE ALBE TO RESIST THE PRESSURES, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL, AND DELAY NPT RATIFICATION INDEFINITELY. IF NPT DOES FACE FURTHER DELAY
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IN ITALY, AFTER RATIFICATION OF THE VERIFICATION AGREE-
MENT, WE BELIEVE OSTROVSKY IS CORRECT THAT PRESSURE
EXERTED HERE IN ROME COULD BE EFFECTIVE. SUCH PRESSURE SHOULD
BE AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL, AS WE HAVE URGED, AND AS OSTROVSKY'S
COMMENTS WOULD ALSO JUSTIFY, BY BYPASS THE DUCCI-GAJA LEVEL.
IT WOULD APPEAR A DIPLOMATIC EFFORT COULD INCLUDE NOT ONLY
THE GERMANS AND PERHAPS OTHER EC MEMBERS OF ZANGGER COMMITTEE
ORIENTATION, BUT ALSO THE SOVIETS. WE WOULD NOT WANT TO SHAKE

THE TREE TOO HARD, BUT WE BELIEVE ITALIAN RATIFICATION IS WELL
WORTH A HARD SELL. VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, NPT, NUCLEAR ENERGY, MINISTERIAL VISITS, DEBRIEFINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 AUG 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ROME11051
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740220-0976
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740855/aaaabvbb.tel
Line Count: 117
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ACDA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MOSCOW 11645 PARA 2(C)
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 MAR 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <15 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN RATIFICATION OF NPT
TAGS: PFOR, PARM, IT, UR, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005